

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1    1. A method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database, the  
2    method comprising:

3        taking a physical inventory;

4        creating raw inventory data;

5        transferring the raw inventory data to a web server;

6        converting the raw inventory data into an intermediate database;

7        creating a copy of the asset management database;

8        reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy  
9        of the asset management database by way of a web browser; and

10      updating the asset management database with records accepted during the reconciling step.

1    2. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2    defined in claim 1 wherein taking physical inventory and creating raw inventory data further  
3    comprises, with a hand held bar code scanning device:

4        scanning a location code;

5        scanning assets codes associate with that location code;

6        repeating the scanning step at a plurality of locations and for a plurality of assets codes;

7        storing the location codes and the asset codes in the hand held bar code scanning device.

1    3. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2    defined in claim 2 wherein storing the location codes and the asset codes in the hand held bar code

3 scanning device further comprises storing the location codes and the asset codes in a file in the  
4 hand held bar code scanner.

1 4. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2 defined in claim 3 wherein storing the location codes and asset codes in a file further comprises  
3 storing the location codes and asset codes in a comma delimited ASCII test file.

1 5. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2 defined in claim 3 wherein transferring the raw inventory data to a web server further comprises  
3 copying the file to a web server using a file transfer protocol (FTP) program.

1 6. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2 defined in claim 3 wherein transferring the raw inventory data to a web server further comprises;  
3 moving the file to an intermediate device; and then  
4 copying the file from the intermediate device to the web server.

1 7. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2 defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises  
3 broadcasting the file using electromagnetic waves.

1 8. The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2 defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises:  
3 copying the file to a semi-permanent storage device; and then

4           copying the file from the semi-permanent storage device to the intermediate device.

1       9.     The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2     defined in claim 8 wherein copying the file to a semi-permanent storage device further comprises  
3     copying the file to a floppy disk.

1       10.    The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2     defined in claim 6 wherein moving the file to an intermediate device further comprises moving the  
3     file to a computer system having an internet connection.

1       11.    The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2     defined in claim 1 wherein converting the raw inventory data into an intermediate database further  
3     comprises converting the raw inventory data into a structured query language (SQL) format  
database having fields for location codes and associated asset codes.

1       12.    The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2     defined in claim 11 further comprising creating additional fields associated with each asset code to  
3     identify a person who performs the reconciliation step.

1       13.    The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2     defined in claim 1 wherein reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding  
3     records in the copy of the asset management database by way of a web browser further comprises:  
4           invoking a web browser program;

5           entering a user identification;  
6           entering a password;  
7           displaying corresponding records between the intermediate database and the copy of the  
8       asset management database;  
9           reconciling the corresponding records creating reconciled records; and  
10          marking at least some of the reconciled records as accepted.

1       14.   The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2       defined in claim 13 wherein invoking a web browser program further comprises invoking an  
3       Internet Explorer® web browser.

1       15.   The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2       defined in claim 13 wherein displaying corresponding records between the intermediate database  
3       and the copy of the asset management database further comprises:  
4           displaying a record from the intermediate database based on an asset code; and  
5           displaying a record from the copy of the asset management database based on the asset  
6       code.

1       16.   The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2       defined in claim 13 wherein updating the asset management database with records accepted during  
3       the reconciling step further comprises copying to the asset management database reconciled  
4       records marked as accepted.

1    17.    The method of reconciling physical inventory against an asset management database as  
2    defined in claim 1 wherein taking a physical inventory further comprises taking a physical  
3    inventory of computer assets.

1    18.    A method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2    asset management database, the method comprising:

3                 scanning with a hand held scanner bar codes identifying locations and bar codes identifying  
4    assets to create inventory data;

5                 transferring the inventory data from the hand held scanner to a web server;

6                 converting the inventory data into an intermediate database;

7                 reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset  
8    management database by way of a web browser; and

9                 updating the asset management database with records accepted during the reconciling step.

1    19.    The method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against  
2    an asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein scanning with a hand held scanner  
3    bar codes identifying locations and bar codes identifying assets further comprises:

4                 scanning a plurality of bar codes identifying locations; and

5                 scanning a bar code identifying at least one asset associated with each location.

1    20.    The method of taking a physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against  
2    an asset management database as defined in claim 19 wherein creating inventory data further

3 comprises storing the bar codes identifying the locations and also storing the bar codes identifying  
4 assets in a file in the hand held scanner.

1 21. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2 asset management database as defined in claim 20 wherein transferring the inventory data from the  
3 hand held scanner to a web server further comprises transferring the file from the hand held  
4 scanner to the web server.

1 22. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2 asset management database as defined in claim 21 wherein transferring the file from the hand held  
3 scanner to the web server further comprises transferring the file using a file transfer protocol (FTP)  
4 program.

1 23. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2 asset management database as defined in claim 21 wherein transferring the file from the hand held  
3 scanner to the web server further comprises;  
4       transferring the file from the hand held scanner to an intermediate device; and  
5       transferring the file from the intermediate device to the web server using the FTP protocol.

1 24. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2 asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held  
3 scanner to the intermediate device further comprises broadcasting the file using electromagnetic  
4 radiation.

1       25.     The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2     asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held  
3     scanner to the intermediate device further comprises:  
4              copying the file to a disk; and then  
5              copying the file from the disk to the intermediate device.

1       26.     The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2     asset management database as defined in claim 23 wherein transferring the file from the hand held  
3     scanner to the web server further comprises;  
4              transferring the file from the hand held scanner to a laptop computer; and  
5              transferring the file from laptop computer to the web server using the FTP protocol.

1       27.     The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2     asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein converting the inventory data into an  
3     intermediate database further comprises converting the inventory data into a structured query  
4     language (SQL) database resident on the web server.

1       28.     The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2     asset management database as defined in claim 18 wherein reconciling records in the intermediate  
3     database against corresponding records in the asset management database by way of a web browser  
4     further comprises:  
5              making a copy of the asset management database available on the web server; and

6           reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy  
7       of the asset management database.

1     29.    The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2       asset management database as defined in claim 28 further comprising, before the step of making a  
3       copy of the asset management database, placing an identifying indicia on a portion of each record  
4       in the asset management database.

1     30.    The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2       asset management database as defined in claim 29 wherein updating the asset management  
3       database with records accepted during the reconciling step further comprises writing the updated  
4       records without the identifying indicia.

1     31.    The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2       asset management database as defined in claim 30 further comprising, after the reconciling step is  
3       complete:

4           searching the asset management database for records having the identifying indicia; and  
5       thereby  
6           identifying assets that were not found during the physical inventory.

1     32.    The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2       asset management database as defined in claim 29 wherein placing an identifying indicia on a

3 portion of each record in the asset management database further comprises appending a code to the  
4 end of each seat code.

1 33. The method of taking physical inventory and reconciling the physical inventory against an  
2 asset management database as defined in claim 32 wherein appending a code to the end of each  
3 seat code further comprises appending the letters "WH" to the end of each seat code.

1 34. A method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory, the method comprising:

3 placing identifying indicia on each seat record in the asset management database;

4 taking the physical inventory using a portable bar code scanning device that saves physical  
5 inventory data in a data file within the portable bar code scanning device;

6 transferring the data file to a web server;

7 transforming the data file into an intermediate database;

8 reconciling records of the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset  
9 management database;

10 writing seat records, associated with assets, to the asset management database without the  
11 identifying indicia; and

12 identifying assets not found during the physical inventory in the asset management  
13 database by identifying seat records having the identifying indicia.

1 35. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein

3 placing identifying indicia on each seat record in the asset management database further comprises  
4 appending a code to the end of each seat code.

1 36. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 35 wherein  
3 appending a code to the end of each seat code further comprises appending the letters "WH" to the  
4 end of each seat code.

1 37. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein  
3 taking the physical inventory using a portable bar code scanning device that saves physical  
4 inventory data in a data file within the portable bar code scanning device further comprises, at a  
5 plurality of locations:

6 scanning a location code that uniquely identifies the location; and  
7 scanning at least one asset code of an asset at the location.

1 38. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein  
3 transferring the data file to a web server further comprises:

4 coupling the portable bar code scanning device to an internet connection; and  
5 transferring the data file to the web server using an FTP program.

1       39. The method of reconciling a physical inventory of assets against an asset management  
2 database and identifying assets not located in the physical inventory as defined in claim 34 wherein  
3 reconciling records of the intermediate database against corresponding records in the asset  
4 management database further comprises:

5              making a copy of the asset management database residing on the web server;

6              reconciling records in the intermediate database against corresponding records in the copy  
7 of the asset management database.

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